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Housekeepers' Chat Tuesday, March 19, 1929.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "A Well-Lighted Kitchen." Approved by Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Convenient Kitchens."

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"Aunt Sammy," said my Next-Door Neighbor, "are you ever going to broadcast a talk about kitchens? If so, please say something about artificial lighting. I've just come from a visit with Ermintrude -- remember Ermintrude? No wonder she is such a pessimistic soul! You should see her kitchen. The walls are an unrelenting greenish blue, the curtains are a drab gray, and there's only one light in the whole kitchen. Can you imagine it? Only one light, and it's high up in the middle of the ceiling. No wonder Ermintrude is such a bum cook -- the poor dear can't see what she's putting in the oven, half the time. She stands in her own shadow. I felt mighty sorry for Ermintrude, but what could I do, without hurting her feelings?"

"Be tactful and subtle," I suggested. "For instance, tell Ermintrude that, generally speaking, light-colored paint is considered best for kitchen walls, because it reflects and diffuses light. Then suggest that if there were glass panels in the back door, she could look out on her hollyhocks, and petunias, in the summer time. You know Ermintrude loves her flowers. Glass panels in the back door would admit good light to her work table during the day. Then she should have artificial light over the table, for use in the evening, and on dark mornings. With a reflector behind it, that would also give better light at the stove. Doesn't Ermintrude know that kitchens need light at all the work centers -- work table, sink, and stove?"

"Evidently not," said my neighbor, "or she'd have more than one light in that big kitchen of hers. Even that one light is dim. If you were going to give a talk on the well-lighted kitchen, what would you say, Aunt Sammy?"

"I'd say," I began, "I'd say something like this: Good artificial light is just as much needed as daylight, at the sink, the stove, the table, and all other work centers. The artificial lights should be arranged so as to prevent glare, and so that a person at any one of the important centers does not have to work in her own shadow. Frosted bulbs or translucent shades will help to diffuse the light, and cut off the glare. If meals are served in a corner of the kitchen, it is pleasant to have a light that illuminates this part only. Then, after the other lights are put out, the dining room seems to be shut off from the rest of the kitchen. If that enough advice?"

"Fine!" said my Neighbor. "On with the speech. What would you say about curtains, for kitchen windows?"

"I'd say that curtains for kitchen windows should be washable, and so arranged that they do not shut out needed light and air. Attractive, inexpensive, and durable kitchen curtains are made of shepherd's plaid gingham, or unbleached muslin, with a border or piping of gingham, or with the hem couched down with bright mercerized floss. Oilcloth, mounted on rollers, makes excellent shades. They are not affected by steam and grease, can be cleaned easily, and if made of an attractive color, and perhaps finished across the top with a plain valance, are pretty enough to take the place of curtains. And if you want to know anything more about kitchens, just get a copy of the bulletin called 'Convenient Kitchens,' and read it carefully."

"I shall send one to Ermintrude," said my Neighbor. "Perhaps she will be inspired to remodel her kitchen, or at least to repaint those horrid dark walls, put in more lights, and hang cheerful curtains at the window.

"By the way, Aunt Sammy, your new curtains are pretty. I always did like unbleached muslin, edged with gingham, for kitchen curtains. Yellow and white checked gingham is attractive, in this sunshiny room. That's a pretty calendar, too, with its golden daffodils. I declare!" said my neighbor, suddenly. "I declare to goodness, Aunt Sammy -- do you know what?"

"What?" I asked.

"I have forgotten to observe St. Patrick's birthday," said my neighbor. "Fancy that! Not even a shamrock did I wear, in honor of good Saint Pat. It's downcast I am, to think I'd forget the patron saint of the Emerald Isle."

"It's not too late," I suggested. "Have dinner with us, and we'll fix up a good Irish stew, with dumplings. Does that appeal to you?"

"Sure, and it does," said my Neighbor. "What good Irishman ever turned down a stew, with dumplings? We need a green vegetable, too, like string beans. Then I'd like some hot scalloped apples, cooked according to your Radio Recipes, and how about baked cup custards, for dessert? I think your menu specialist would approve of this meal: Irish Stew, with Dumplings; String Beans; Hot Scalloped Apples; and Baked Cup Custards. It appeals to the eye, as well as the tongue; good for the old, as well as the young. How's that, Aunt Sammy?"

"Not so good, if you're speaking of the verse; but very nice, if you mean the menu."

Now, if you'll take your pencils, I'll give you the recipe we used for Irish Stew. It's from the Recipe Lady's Notebook. Nine ingredients, for Irish Stew:

2 pounds breast of lamb or mutton
2-1/2 cups boiling water
2 onions, diced
4 potatoes, diced
1 tablespoon flour
4 carrots, diced
2 turnips, diced
Salt and pepper, and
1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Nine ingredients, for Irish Stew: (Repeat)

Sear the meat, in its own fat, with the onions. Add the boiling water. Let the meat simmer, until nearly tender. Add the diced vegetables, and seasoning, and cook for 15 minutes. Mix the flour, with enough cold water to make a smooth paste. Add to the stew, and stir until it thickens. Then add the dumplings, cover the kettle tightly, and cook for 15 minutes longer. By this time the vegetables should be tender, but not overcooked.

Next, the dumplings. Some one asked for a dumpling recipe the other day. I hope she's listening in, so that she can write this. Five ingredients, for dumplings:

1 cup flour, sifted
2-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 egg
1/3 cup milk, and
1/2 teaspoon salt

I'll repeat the five ingredients for dumplings: (Repeat).

Sift the flour, baking powder, and salt together. Beat the egg well. Add the milk, and mix with the dry ingredients. Drop by small spoonfuls into the Irish Stew. Cover tightly, and cook for 15 minutes. The top must not be removed, while the dumplings are cooking. If the steam escapes, the dumplings will not be light.

To repeat the menu: Irish Stew, with Dumplings; String Beans, Hot Scalloped Apples; and Baked Cup Custards.

Tomorrow: "Curtains for the Home." And a new recipe for date bars, made with oat meal and brown sugar.